

REMARKS

1. Claims 1-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McNerney et al U.S. Patent No. (5,999,208). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants claimed invention is directed to various modalities for communicating virtual conference information among a plurality of virtual reality terminals. One of the more sophisticated features of applicant's invention relates to "filtering" and "supplementing" the virtual conference information. For example and without limitation, in the case where a facial image is obtained from a headset and partially obscured by the headset, extraneous portions of the image (e.g., the headset portion) may be filtered/removed and then supplemented or "filled in" to give the appearance of a complete facial image. Each of claims 1-20 either recite or depend from claims that recite limitations relating to filtering or supplementing the virtual conference information. Claims 1 and 11 have been amended to more clearly recited that the filtering limitation involves removing an extraneous portion of an image. Claims 14 and 19 as previously presented include limitations relating to removing an extraneous portion of an image.

McNerney et al. describes a PC-based application for portraying mixed-media conference participants on a PC screen in a "virtual reality mixed media meeting room." The meeting room is described as a "virtual reality" room in the sense that it emulates the appearance of a traditional conference room and can show images of participants and devices that would be present in a traditional conference room. However, it is noted, McNerney describes a relatively unsophisticated virtual reality modality. To the extent McNerney may be considered to display "virtual images," such images are merely displayed on a PC screen. McNerney does not contemplate filtering or supplementing images, for example, by removing extraneous portions of images and supplementing with a different images or portions of images.

The Office Action suggests that McNerney teaches the "filtering" limitation at col. 6, lines 39-66 in that a user can retrieve an image from memory and drag and drop onto a display to "update the display of an image." Respectfully, however, the referenced text neither discloses or suggests filtering and supplementing as claimed, wherein extraneous portions are removed from an image and supplemented with supplemental information. In particular, neither the original image or the retrieved image described in McNerney have extraneous portions removed

coincident to the drag and drop of a retrieved image onto a display. Accordingly, claims 1-20 are believed to patentably distinguish over McNerney and to be in condition for allowance.

2. In view of the above amendments and remarks, a notice of allowance of claims 1-20 is respectfully requested. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any additional fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Lucent Technologies Deposit Account No. 12-2325.

Respectfully submitted,

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